

I'On At Home Annual Report – 2016

During 2016 the leadership of I'On At Home has been stable, with the 2015 leaders and officers continuing to serve. This has provided much-needed continuity for the organization during its transition from a group of neighbors with a common interest to a nonprofit corporation. During the year, the professional advice of an attorney, two CPAs, and several insurance brokers was sought to ensure that appropriate decisions were being made.

Leadership: Early in 2016 the Leadership Group changed its name to Steering Committee, a title that was universally understood. At the time of incorporation, later in the year, the Steering Committee was elected as the official Board of Directors (BOD). The BOD consists of Lori Bate, Kay Chitty, Barbara Cole, Barbara Fowler, Anne Register, Bill Settlemyer, Brenda Uttaro, Becky Van Wie, Don Wilbur, Mary Wilbur, and MP Wilkerson. Officers for 2016 were Brenda Uttaro, Chair; Bill Settlemyer, Vice Chair; Becky Van Wie, Secretary; and, Kay Chitty, Treasurer.

January – March: The Steering Committee determined that financial donations should be solicited to support the work necessary for IAH to become a functioning nonprofit. One hundred percent of the Steering Committee members made contributions before any other requests were made. A meeting was held on February 25 to update neighbors on progress and to ask for their support as donors and/or volunteers. More donations and indications of interest resulted. In March, IAH officially joined the Village-to-Village Network and requested a 'mentor village' to help guide its development. The mentor assigned was Carolina Villages in Chapel Hill, NC.

April – June: A series of five Living Room Chats were held in April to allow interested neighbors to ask questions and offer input about IAH. Approximately forty I'On residents attended and heard about how the organization was being shaped. They had the opportunity to share their ideas and opinions; enthusiasm for IAH was strong. Donations continued. On May 4, the Secretary of State's office notified the Chair that IAH was officially incorporated as a nonprofit in the state of SC. The Steering Committee held a retreat in late May with a representative of the mentor village, the Executive Director of Carolina Villages, and convened an official organizing meeting. Bylaws were adopted, Steering Committee members were elected to become the initial Board of Directors of IAH, Inc., and officers were elected. In June, work was completed on the 501(c)(3) application to the IRS. Five committees were formed: Finance, Programs and Services, Marketing and Communications, Membership, and Volunteers. Committees began working to complete the organizational phase of IAH. A date to begin services was set for March 2017. A social/educational program was held during June, an exercise/nutrition program, which was well attended. Directors & Officers insurance was purchased. QuickBooks was purchased to facilitate appropriate financial reporting.

July – September: Committees consisting of BOD members and interested residents began work on policies and procedures to set forth in detail how the organization will function. Another social/educational program, a wine tasting, was held in August with the goal of continuing to engage community interest. In mid-August, word was received that the IRS application had been approved. I'On At Home became a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) charitable organization, effective as of its incorporation date of May 4, 2016. A cyber-security workshop was held in September, detailing for attendees how to protect themselves from identity theft and privacy invasion. By the end of September, thirty-two households and one neighborhood business had provided over \$13,000 to cover the costs of putting a solid IAH infrastructure in place, thereby demonstrating their belief in the value of such a program.

October – December: Although Hurricane Matthew disrupted life in the Lowcountry for a week in October, progress continued with committees developing membership and volunteer application forms, manuals for members and volunteers, and making the many decisions needed to build a firm financial and organizational foundation for the new nonprofit. Management software, Helpful Villages, was purchased. A very successful “Celebrity Chef” dinner was held in October; and a program titled, “The Grandchildren Are Coming!” was held in November. Documents from all the committees were compiled, edited, and formally approved by the BOD. The first Annual Meeting was held on December 6, at which two new board members were elected: Bob Fry and Fred White.

Looking forward to 2017: The first quarter of 2017 will be a busy one for I'On At Home. Volunteers will be recruited and trained and memberships will become available. The goal for 2017 is to enroll 70 members. Those joining prior to March 1 will be Charter Members and their membership fees will be frozen for the first two years. Business sponsorships will be marketed to area businesses.

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